


CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

Office Memorandum

Date: January 30, 1996
To: Lester A. Snow
From: Steve Yaeger 
Subject: Modification to Alternatives

As we have discussed earlier, I believe that many of the alternatives which are focused on ecosystem water quality and levee stability lack balance in the water supply resource area. These alternatives essentially provide only status quo water supply benefits while providing additional benefits for the other resource areas.

I believe that the subject alternatives could be made more balanced by providing the following actions, and I propose that the following elements be incorporated in alternative 6:

- Provide an adaptive management program as part of the habitat restoration elements which is directly tied to both further stages of habitat restoration and to staging of improvements in water supply flexibility.
- Stipulate that the habitat restoration work will be performed in 10 - 20%+ increments and the performance of these improvements evaluated and monitored as part of the adaptive management program before additional increments are constructed.
- Stipulate that as the adaptive management program monitoring of habitat verifies that the habitat restoration items are improving populations within the fishery, the export ratios during the summer and fall months will be liberalized to allow additional water transfers to take place.
- Provide additional export capacity at the existing project pumps to take advantage of higher water transfers as habitat monitoring verifies fishery improvements.
- Provide additional diversion points within the central and north Delta to improve the capability and flexibility for water transfers.

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Additionally, the water supply alternatives that have major facilities can be made more balanced, in my mind, by interjecting staging and time sequence in the alternative. What I mean by that is for those alternatives that require construction of major facilities, there will be a time lag of 10 - 15 years before these facilities become constructed and functional. That, to me, is a justification for providing a higher level of habitat improvements than could be justified purely on the basis of long-term benefits. For example, when an alternative changes the location of the diversion point, it can be argued that there are substantial long-term fishery benefits from that action. However, because of the time lag involved, it could also be argued that habitat restoration needs to be coupled with that alternative on a high level in order to restore the fisheries during the interim until the diversion is completed. This also argues for an adaptive management program which would evaluate the effectiveness of the habitat restorations in restoring fisheries populations and stage an additional capability to provide water transfers as a water supply benefit in lockstep with habitat improvements.

This concept would provide a stageable project that would benefit both fisheries and water supply during the interim period that would be required to construct facilities and habitat restoration elements which would provide the more long-term benefits.